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OO RUOMFR
DF RUSPIL #5653 200115Z
ZNY CCCCC 724
O R 251123Z JUL 70
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASEDC IMMEDIATE 4915
INFO RUOMCO/AMEMBASSY AMARA 3676
RUSPDD/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 9272
RUDTC/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1706
RUEFWO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1777
RUSBAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 7138
RUFNPS/AMEMBASSY PARIS 3179
RUOMFR/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 349
RUHQHQA/CINCPAC
PEMJPG/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 641
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 5603

CINCPAC: ALSO FOR POLAD

F.O. 12065: GDS 7-25-65 (TAYLOR, JAMES E.) OR-P
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, AF
SUBJECT: (LOU) AMIN GIVEN MORE DIRECT ROLE IN PROSECUTING
COUNTERINSURGENCY

1. (C) SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER AMIN HAS BEEN GIVEN A MORE DIRECT ROLE IN CARRYING OUT THE REGIME'S TRUGGLE AGAINST THE DOMESTIC INSURGENCY, AS WELL AS RESPONSIBILITY FOR DIRECTLY CONTROLLING AFFAIRS OF THE DEFENSE MINISTRY. THIS ENHANCED POSITION SUGGESTS HIS DEPARTURE FROM THE SCENE IS NOT YET IMMINENT, ALTHOUGH IT IS UNCLEAR WHERE THIS PARTICULAR DEVELOPMENT FITS IN THE STILL UNFOLDING POLITICAL DRAMA HERE. END OF SUMMARY.

2. (LOU) RADIO AFGHANISTAN, IN ITS EVENING NEWS BROADCAST ON JULY 27, CARRIED A "DPCREE" FROM PRESIDENT NOOR MOHAMMAD TARAKI WHICH APPEARS TO ENHANCE THE ROLE OF PRIME MINISTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN IN COMBATTING THE DOMESTIC INSURGENCY. ACCORDING TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT, "THE CONTINUED AGGRESSION" AGAINST AFGHANISTAN BY "PAKISTANI AND IRANIAN MILITIAMEN" HAS REQUIRED TARAKI TO ASSUME PERSONAL LEADERSHIP OF THE COUNTRY'S DEFENSE AND COMMAND OF THE ARMED FORCES. TARAKI, HOWEVER, WAS "ENTRUSTED" AMIN, IN ADDITION TO HIS OTHER DUTIES, WITH THE EXECUTION OF TARAKI'S ORDERS, AND HAS INSTRUCTED THE PRIME MINISTER TO REPORT REGULARLY REGARDING PROGRESS IN THE COUNTER-INSURGENCY EFFORT. MOREOVER, AMIN HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO "TAKE OVER" THE AFFAIRS OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE UNDER TARAKI'S

OVERALL COMMAND AND GUIDANCE.

3. (C) COMMENT: WHERE THIS PARTICULAR DEVELOPMENT FITS IN THE CURRENTLY UNFOLDING POLITICAL DRAMA HERE IS STILL UNCLEAR. WHAT SEEMS FAIRLY CERTAIN, HOWEVER, IS THAT THE AUTHORITY AND, PERHAPS, POLITICAL PRESTIGE OF DEFENSE MINISTER MOHAMMAD ASLAM WATANJAR HAS BEEN DIMINISHED. MANY OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT WATANJAR COULD PLAY A PROMINENT PART IN ANY EFFORT TO ESTABLISH A MORE BROADLY BASED REGIME -- BECAUSE HE IS CONSIDERED MORE NATIONALIST THAN THE TARAKI/AMIN TEAM -- AND HIS FATE MAY PROVIDE HINTS REGARDING DIRECTIONS POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS MAY TAKE.

4. (C) AT A MINIMUM, THE ANNOUNCEMENT POINTS TO A LARGER AND MORE DIRECT ROLE FOR AMIN IN THE DRA'S ANTI-INSURGENCY BATTLE. A POSITION WHICH SUGGESTS THAT AMIN'S DEPARTURE -- TO PAVE THE WAY FOR SOME SORT OF "NATIONAL FRONT" REGIME -- IS NOT YET IMMINENT. UNCERTAINTIES CONCERNING THE LOYALTY AND MORALE OF THE ARMED FORCES COULD HAVE PROMPTED THIS MOVE, SINCE THE DRA LEADERSHIP MAY HAVE FELT THAT AMIN, RATHER THAN PROFESSIONAL SOLDIER WATANJAR, WILL BE MORE CAPABLE OF INSTILLING PROPER REVOLUTIONARY ZEAL WITHIN THE WEARY AND HARD-PRESSED AFGHAN MILITARY FORCES. AT THE TIME OF THE 1978 REVOLUTION, AMIN HAD MANY DIRECT PERSONAL TIES TO MILITARY OFFICERS, MOST OF WHOM HE HAD PERSONALLY RECRUITED INTO THE PARTY. THE CURRENT STATE OF THOSE TIES AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR OF PURGES, INSURGENCY, AND INSTABILITY IS UNKNOWN. AMSTUTZ

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